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August 6, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Charter School Directors, Special Education Directors,
Curriculum and Instruction Directors, and District Test Coordinators

FROM: Gwen Perea Warniment, PhD, Deputy Secretary of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment
Katarina Sandoval, Deputy Secretary of Academic Engagement & Student Success

RE: Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) Alternate Assessment

The purpose of this memorandum is to announce the new alternate achievement assessment for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that all students, including students with the most severe cognitive disabilities, participate in state assessments (ESSA 1111(b)(2)(B)), but ESSA allows states to administer an alternate assessment to these students for whom general state assessments are not appropriate, even with accommodations (ESSA 1111(b)(2)(D)).

New Mexico's alternate assessment is currently the New Mexico Alternate Performance Assessment (NMAPA). The last administration of NMAPA will be fall 2019 for seniors who need to pass the exam as a requirement for graduation. The NMAPA contract is set to expire after the fall administration.

Dynamic Learning Maps Selected to Replace NMAPA

The PED has selected Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) to replace NMAPA. The DLM is a collaboration of 20 states, facilitated by the University of Kansas, working together to design instructional resources and assessments for this special population. A steering committee of state special education directors and district test coordinators (DTCs) helped the PED make this selection.

The DLM assesses student learning in mathematics, English language arts, and science. There will no longer be an alternate assessment in social studies.

Training and Support for Districts and Charter Schools

The PED and DLM will provide a series of trainings to help teachers of this student population, administrators, and district test coordinators smoothly transition to the new alternate assessment. Superintendents are encouraged to allow all teachers who administer the alternate assessment to participate in the “Getting to Know DLM” webinar, with the same content presented at two different times. Registration links are below:

- September 11th at 12:00 p.m. [Registration](#)
- September 12th at 4:00 p.m. [Registration](#)

Spring 2020 DLM Test Administration

The DLM provides alternate assessments in English language arts, math, and science for students in grades 3–8 and 11. The first test administration of the DLM will occur between March 9 and April 10, 2020. Please refer to the 2019–20 PED Assessment Calendar.

For the spring 2020 administration of DLM, LEAs will not be invoiced.

Instructional Supports

The DLM is aligned to Essential Expectations (EEs), grade-level-specific expectations about what students with the most significant cognitive disabilities should know and be able to do. The EEs are related to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. The DLM has a strong classroom instructional component that will assist special education teachers in planning standards-based instruction.

For questions about the DLM assessment, contact Karen Greer at the Assessment Bureau at Karen.Greer@state.nm.us. For questions about students with severe cognitive disabilities, contact Sbicca Brodeur at the Special Education Bureau at Sbicca.Brodeur@state.nm.us. For more information about alternate assessment, please visit the [Alternate Assessment page](#) of the PED website.

cc: Kara Bobroff, Interim Secretary
Tim Hand, PhD, Deputy Secretary
Adán Delgado, Deputy Secretary
Deborah Dominguez Clark, Director of Special Education
Lynn Vásquez, Director of Assessment of Student Learning